

# Senate File 420 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 420

BY CHELGREN

## A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the school start date and providing for a  
2 school foundation aid reduction for early school starts  
3 based upon the number of students excused to attend the Iowa  
4 state fair.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 257.17, Code 2015, is amended by striking  
2 the section and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

3 **257.17 Aid reduction for early school starts — Iowa state**  
4 **fair attendance.**

5 1. A school district shall excuse any student for a day in  
6 which the student attends the Iowa state fair upon submission  
7 to the school district of proof of the student's attendance at  
8 the Iowa state fair.

9 2. In the enrollment report submitted pursuant to section  
10 257.6, subsection 1, the school district shall report the  
11 number of students and the number of days such students were  
12 excused in accordance with subsection 1. The aid payments  
13 made pursuant to section 257.16 for a fiscal year shall be  
14 reduced in the proportion that the number of students and  
15 the number of days such students were excused by the school  
16 district in accordance with subsection 1 bears to the total  
17 actual enrollment of the school district and the number of  
18 instructional days or hours required under section 279.10,  
19 subsection 1.

20 3. This section does not apply to a school district or  
21 attendance center that maintains a year-round three semester  
22 school calendar.

23 Sec. 2. Section 279.10, subsection 1, Code 2015, is amended  
24 to read as follows:

25 1. The school year for each school district and accredited  
26 nonpublic school shall begin on July 1 ~~and each regularly~~  
27 ~~established elementary and secondary school shall begin no~~  
28 ~~sooner than a day during the calendar week in which the first~~  
29 ~~day of September falls but no later than the first Monday in~~  
30 ~~December. However, if the first day of September falls on a~~  
31 ~~Sunday, school may begin on a day during the calendar week~~  
32 ~~which immediately precedes the first day of September. The~~  
33 school calendar shall include not less than one hundred eighty  
34 days, except as provided in subsection 3, or one thousand  
35 eighty hours of instruction during the calendar year. The

1 board of directors of a school district and the authorities in  
 2 charge of an accredited nonpublic school shall set the number  
 3 of days or hours of required attendance for the school year  
 4 as provided in section 299.1, subsection 2, but the board of  
 5 directors of a school district shall hold a public hearing  
 6 on any proposed school calendar prior to adopting the school  
 7 calendar. If the board of directors of a district or the  
 8 authorities in charge of an accredited nonpublic school extends  
 9 the school calendar because inclement weather caused the school  
 10 district or accredited nonpublic school to temporarily close  
 11 during the regular school calendar, the school district or  
 12 accredited nonpublic school may excuse a graduating senior  
 13 who has met district or school requirements for graduation  
 14 from attendance during the extended school calendar. A school  
 15 corporation may begin employment of personnel for in-service  
 16 training and development purposes before the date to begin  
 17 elementary and secondary school.

18 Sec. 3. Section 279.10, subsection 4, Code 2015, is amended  
 19 by striking the subsection.

20 Sec. 4. Section 299.1, subsection 2, Code 2015, is amended  
 21 to read as follows:

22 2. The board of directors of a public school district or  
 23 the governing body of an accredited nonpublic school shall  
 24 set the number of days or hours of required attendance for  
 25 the schools under its control. The board of directors of a  
 26 public school district or the governing body of an accredited  
 27 nonpublic school may, by resolution, require attendance for  
 28 the entire time when the schools are in session in any school  
 29 year and adopt a policy or rules relating to the reasons  
 30 considered to be valid or acceptable excuses for absence from  
 31 school. Attendance at the Iowa state fair shall be construed  
 32 as a reasonable excuse for a student's absence from school for  
 33 purposes of this chapter.

#### 34 EXPLANATION

35 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with

1           the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

2       This bill eliminates or modifies provisions relating to the  
3 current school start date limitation which prohibits public and  
4 accredited nonpublic schools from beginning the school calendar  
5 prior to a day during the calendar week in which September 1  
6 falls or, if September 1 falls on a Sunday, prior to a day  
7 during the calendar week which immediately precedes September  
8 1, unless the school receives a waiver from the department of  
9 education.

10      The bill provides that attendance at the Iowa state fair  
11 shall be construed as a reasonable excuse for a student's  
12 absence from school for purposes of the compulsory attendance  
13 laws. A school district must excuse any student for a day in  
14 which the student attends the Iowa state fair upon submission  
15 to the school district of proof of the student's attendance at  
16 the Iowa state fair.

17      The bill also provides for a reduction in the school  
18 district's school foundation aid payments in the proportion  
19 that the number of students and the number of days such  
20 students were excused by the school district bears to the total  
21 actual enrollment of the school district and the number of  
22 instructional days or hours required by law. School districts  
23 and attendance centers that operate year-round are exempt from  
24 the reduction.

25      The bill strikes a provision that authorizes the department  
26 of education to grant a school district's request to waive the  
27 earliest school start date allowed.